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Cool News

ABCD review

Published at: Nov 30, 2001 3:09:38 AM CST

Sometimes movies that you love come back a second time. When I first experienced ABCD it was in the middle of a film festival well over a year ago. It was in my top two films of that festival, and immediately I was forced into travel, the fall film reviews, a gal I was seeing... Life became too busy and I never seemed ready to write about it. It felt like a helpless battle.

You see, for most people, Krutin Patel's ABCD is a Hindi film. A movie about the difficulties within the Hindi communities and outside it that those of a Hindu background that have adjusted and become 'American' are faced with. The prejudice, the hardships, the joys, the repressions and the joy and horror of liberty.

Frankly though, this isn't a tale about just people from India now living in America... Sure a narrow minded log-line assistant could claim that, because they had no eyes and no soul to go with it. For me ABCD is a story about siblings and their mother. It is about being traditional or being who you are. It is about doing the expected versus what is right for

you. It is about the chains of expectations and the what events one must live through before breaking them.

I haven't seen this film in over a year now. It has been... seemingly forever. I remember clearly the themes, if not the dialogue. The sister... my god, Nina I believe her name was and the actress... Lovely beyond words. She had a wild streak in her eyes and in her character. She would do and be anything to not be Hindi. She was the ABCD of the story... the American Born Confused Deshi - my understanding of the word Deshi is that it means you come from an area or type of place within India originally. She argues with her traditional mother, who likes to think that she is still intact, that she is still pure... that she will marry a nice Indian man and have a good family. That this man will have a good providing job and that her security is taken care of. Though he is the better man in her life... She reacts violently to that which her mother expects of her.

Now while Nina is the beauty, it is her brother Raj, who I adore beyond words in this film. Raj is a deeply textured and involving portrait of a man, who knows what his path is and sees it as a very flat and unchanging world. He is not happy. He works hard, does his job, finds friends being promoted above him... contemplates that racism is at work at all times. Believes he is being treated badly because of the color of his skin or the number of vowels in his last name. And when he finds out the flip side to it all his world crashes, and continues to crash and it is simply wonderful to watch this actor... Faran Tahir grab me in and hold me throughout. This man should be in ALOT of films. A LOT!

Did you see TWO FAMILY HOUSE or GOAT ON FIRE AND SMILING FISH because of me? For me this is like those films in terms of just being fantastically real and human and vital.

This is playing extremely limited across the country. Check your listings, see if your reviewers have reviewed it. But know that this film is witty, smart, intelligent, superbly acted and passionately told. Krutin Patel is hopefully going to make quite a few more films for us all to see. He is quite talented, and ABCD is sure enough evidence that he can tell a

captivating story, that though I haven't seen it in a year... It has not faded from my memory, it is here... in my noggin... How many last that long after a single viewing? Eh?



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Readers Talkback

- Nov 30, 2001 9:50:46 AM CST

[***sob*, RIP George**](#)

by la dolce vita

I jst heard the news from my dad when I got back from the cinema. He was my favourite Beatle, too. Harry, someone, you certainly should post the news on the front page. It's George Harrison, after all, and it's not as if he was uninvolved in movies. His production career alone covered the spectrum, from THE LIFE OF BRIAN to, er, SHANGHAI SURPRISED. Vale George Harrison, you will be missed.

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- Nov 30, 2001 10:05:51 AM CST

[**Harry, Jay, Mori, please mention George on the front page...**](#)

by reni

Come on chaps, none of the other sites have mentioned George passing away on their front pages. It 'is' relevant. Even if you just want to mention the films he produced with Handmade Films. Please put something on here. Sorry to go off on a tangent. This has nothing to do with ABCD, lovely as that may be.

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- Nov 30, 2001 10:42:56 AM CST

[**George**](#)

by captain fantasy

Trust me guys,... AICN will have something up soon about the passing of one of the greats. They either haven't heard about it or are in the process of writing a proper tribute.

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- Nov 30, 2001 1:53:45 PM CST

[**Harry, you're using "Hindi" and "Hindu" interchangeably**](#)

by the_black_hair

One's a language, the other's a religion.

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- Nov 30, 2001 5:56:24 PM CST

[**American Desi By Krutin Patel**](#)